

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) A method of screening for a therapeutic substance for a renal disease comprising:

(a) cultivating a cell in the absence and presence of a test compound, wherein the cell is capable of producing a protein or salt thereof comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:2;

(b) lysing the cell to obtain a cell lysate containing the protein or salt thereof.

[[ (b) ]] (c) immobilizing on a solid phase a polynucleotide to which the protein or salt thereof is capable of binding;

[[ (c) ]] (d) contacting the solid phase with the ~~protein or salt thereof~~ cell lysate and an antibody against the protein or salt thereof;

[[ (d) ]] (e) measuring production of the protein or salt thereof and the binding activity of the protein or salt thereof to the polynucleotide;

[[ (e) ]] (f) comparing production of the protein or salt thereof and the binding activity of the protein or salt thereof when the cell is cultivated in the absence of the test compound and when the cell is cultivated in the presence of the test compound;

[[ (f) ]] (g) selecting a compound that (1) decreases the production of the protein or salt thereof and/or (2) decreases the binding activity of the protein or salt thereof; and

[[[g)]] (h) selecting the compound of step [[[f)]](g) that decreases the level of at least one selected from urinary albumin excretion, TGF- $\beta$ 1, ICAM-1, tissue factor, PDGF-B, fibronectin, and  $\alpha$ 1 (I) collagen.

2. – 5. (Cancelled)

6. (Previously presented) The screening method according to claim 1, wherein the renal disease is diabetic nephropathy.

7. – 11. (Cancelled)

12. (Withdrawn) A compound or salts thereof obtained by the screening method according to claim 1.

13. (Withdrawn) A prophylactic and therapeutic product for diseases associated with a protein or salts thereof comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as that represented by SEQ ID NO: 1, which comprises a compound or salts thereof obtained by the screening method according to claim 1.

14. (Withdrawn) A screening method for a prophylactic and therapeutic substance for diseases associated with a protein or salts thereof comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as that represented by SEQ ID NO: 1, which is characterized by using a polynucleotide comprising a base sequence or a partial sequence thereof encoding a protein or

salts thereof comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as that represented by SEQ ID NO: 1.

15. (Withdrawn) A screening method for a prophylactic and therapeutic substance for diseases associated with a protein or salts thereof comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as that represented by SEQ ID NO: 1, which is characterized by using a polynucleotide comprising a base sequence or a partial sequence thereof encoding a protein or salts thereof comprising the amino acid sequence as that represented by SEQ ID NO: 1.

16. (Withdrawn) The screening method according to claim 14, wherein the polynucleotide comprises a base sequence or a partial sequence thereof represented by SEQ ID NO: 3 or SEQ ID NO: 4.

17. (Withdrawn) The screening method according to claim 14, wherein the disease is a renal disease.

18. (Withdrawn) The screening method according to claim 17, wherein the renal disease is an Egr-1 depending renal disease.

19. (Withdrawn) The screening method according to claim 17, wherein the renal disease is diabetic nephropathy.

20. (Withdrawn) The screening method according to claim 14, which is characterized by comparing the level of RNA encoding a protein or salts thereof comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as that represented by SEQ ID NO: 1 in the case where a cell is cultivated that has the capability of producing a protein or salts thereof comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as that represented by SEQ ID NO: 1 and the case where a cell is cultivated that has the capability of producing a protein or salts thereof comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as that represented by SEQ ID NO: 1 in the presence of a test compound.

21. (Withdrawn) A compound or salts thereof obtained by the screening method according to claim 14.

22. (Withdrawn) A prophylactic and therapeutic product for diseases associated with a protein or salts thereof comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as that represented by SEQ ID NO: 1, which comprises a compound or salts thereof obtained by the screening method according to claim 14.

23. (Withdrawn) An antibody against a protein or salts thereof comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as that represented by SEQ ID NO: 1.

24. (Withdrawn) A prophylactic and therapeutic product for diseases associated with a protein or salts thereof comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as that represented by SEQ ID NO: 1, which comprises the antibody according to claim 23.

25. (Withdrawn) A prophylactic and therapeutic product for diseases associated with a protein or salts thereof comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as that represented by SEQ ID NO: 1, which comprises a polynucleotide having a complementary base sequence to the base sequence encoding a protein comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as that represented by SEQ ID NO: 1, or its partial sequence.

26. (Withdrawn) A diagnostic product for diseases associated with a protein or salts thereof comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as that represented by SEQ ID NO: 1, which comprises the antibody according to claim 23.

27. (Withdrawn) A diagnostic product for diseases associated with a protein or salts thereof comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as that represented by SEQ ID NO: 1, which comprises a polynucleotide having the base sequence or its partial sequence encoding a protein comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as that represented by SEQ ID NO: 1.

28. (Withdrawn) A prophylactic and therapeutic product for diseases associated with a protein or salts thereof comprising the same or substantially the same amino acid sequence as that represented by SEQ ID NO: 1, which is characterized by comprising a polynucleotide having a base sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 5 or SEQ ID NO: 6.

29. (Withdrawn) The prophylactic and therapeutic product according to claim 28, wherein the disease is a renal disease.

30. (Withdrawn) The prophylactic and therapeutic product according to claim 29, wherein the renal disease is an Egr-1 depending renal disease.

31. (Withdrawn) The prophylactic and therapeutic product according to claim 29, wherein the renal disease is diabetic nephropathy.

32. (Withdrawn) A prophylactic and therapeutic product for diabetic nephropathy comprising a suppressor of Egr-1.

33. (Withdrawn) The prophylactic and therapeutic product according to claim 32, wherein the suppressor of Egr-1 is a suppressor of renal Egr-1.

34. (Withdrawn) A method for the prophylaxis and treatment of diabetic nephropathy in a mammal, which is characterized by administering a suppressor of Egr-1 to the mammal.

35. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 34, wherein the suppressor of Egr-1 is a suppressor of renal Egr-1.

36. (Withdrawn) Use of a suppressor of Egr-1 for the manufacture of a prophylactic and therapeutic product for diabetic nephropathy.

37. (Withdrawn) The use according to claim 36, wherein the suppressor of Egr-1 is a suppressor of renal Egr-1.